

ACCSC ACCREDITATION ALERT

To: ACCSC Accredited Institutions and Other Interested Parties
From: Michale S. McComis, Ed.D., Executive Director
Date: February 12, 2020
Subject: Voting on Proposed Revisions to the ACCSC *Bylaws* and School Commissioner Election

Vote and Election

ACCSC School Commissioner Election

The Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges has established a slate of candidates for election to serve a four-year term and a three-year term as an ACCSC School Commissioner.

Proposed Bylaws Revisions

The Accrediting Alliance of Career Schools and Colleges (dba ACCSC) proposes revisions to its Bylaws in the following areas:

- Section 1.01 - Definitions
- Section 1.09 – Committees

Voting on the Proposed Revisions to the *Bylaws* and Election to the Commission

On February 20, 2020, each ACCSC-accredited member institution will receive an e-mail from ACCSC with a website link and login instructions to cast its vote in the School Commissioner Election and *Bylaws* vote. *Each member shall have one vote, except that a group of affiliated schools – i.e., schools under common ownership – may have no more than five total votes regardless of the number of members in the group.*

If you have any questions regarding voting via electronic ballot to include password requests, please contact Holly Eichhorst, Manager of Commission Actions, at heichhorst@accsc.org or 703.247.4524.

Bylaws revisions will be effective July 1, 2020. For additional information related to this *Accreditation Alert*, please contact Michale S. McComis, Ed.D., Executive Director, at 703.247.4520 or mccomis@accsc.org.

ACCSC School Commissioner Election

Pursuant to *Section 1.04 (a)* and *Section 2.07 of the ACCSC Bylaws*, ACCSC will conduct an election beginning on **February 20, 2020** and ending on **March 5, 2020** to fill the following School Commissioner seat:

- 1 Elected School Commissioner for a four (4) year term to begin July 1, 2020 and end June 30, 2024
- 1 Elected School Commissioner for a three (3) year term to begin July 1, 2020 and end June 30, 2023

Upon the recommendation of the ACCSC Nominating Committee and consent by the full Commission the following individuals have been slated as candidates for the School Commissioner election.

- **Susan Naples** – Lincoln Technical Institute
- **Jessica Sanders** – Ancora Education
- **Nicole Vitez** – Hollywood Institute / Cortiva Institute

ACCSC encourages all accredited member institutions to take the time to review each candidate for School Commissioner prior to the election. To view the ACCSC election announcement and the candidate's nomination materials, please [click here](#).

Electronic Election Instructions

On February 20, 2020, each ACCSC-accredited member institution will receive an e-mail from ACCSC with a website link and login instructions to cast its vote in the School Commissioner Election. The election of Commissioners is an important part of ACCSC's accreditation activities and the Commission encourages each accredited institution to cast its vote once the election opens. ***Each member shall have one vote, except that a group of affiliated schools – i.e., schools under common ownership – may have no more than five total votes regardless of the number of members in the group.***

If you have any questions regarding voting via electronic ballot to include password requests, please contact Holly Eichhorst, Manager of Commission Actions, at heichhorst@accsc.org or 703.247.4524.

Proposed Bylaws Revisions

The Accrediting Alliance of Career Schools and Colleges (dba ACCSC) proposes revisions to its Bylaws in the following areas:

Proposal #1 Rationale:

The Commission has determined, based upon feedback from the Nominating Committee and upon the Commissioners' own experiences, that individuals with experience with an "ACCSC-accredited school" and experience with the accreditation process, are better equipped to serve as an ACCSC School Commissioner. The role of an ACCSC School Commissioner relies on experience, good judgement, and an ability to make subjective evaluations about compliance with accreditation standards across an array of circumstances, situations, and diverse institution types. In the judgement of the Commission, this is best supported and achieved when an individual has actual experience in school operations and accreditation in an ACCSC-accredited school. Overall, the Commission wants to ensure for the sake of the membership that only well-qualified individuals are eligible to serve in this important decision-making capacity and role.

New Language in ***Red, Bold and Italic Print***.

Deleted Language in ~~Blue Strikethrough Print~~.

Editorial Language in ***Green, Bold, and Italic Print***.

Section 1.01 – Definitions

d. School Commissioner: A person who:

- i. Is ~~an experienced~~ proprietor, owner, or bona fide executive of a member of the Corporation as described in Section 2.01 hereof that has been accredited by ACCSC for at least five years ~~without the issuance of a Warning or Probation⁺ at the time of or during the five years preceding the individual's nomination to serve as a School Commissioner;~~ ***[The Commission is proposing to move and revise the strikethrough text – it is not being proposed for complete removal. See Proposed Revision #3 below in Section 1.09.]***
- ii. ***Has at least five years of ownership or bona fide executive experience in an ACCSC-accredited school, has participated in at least one full accreditation process with an ACCSC-accredited school, and*** is active in school operations;
- iii. Has a past record demonstrating:
 1. A commitment to providing quality education to students;
 2. A commitment to ethical, fair, and honest practice; and
 3. Compliance with accrediting standards and applicable federal, state, and local requirements; and
- iv. Has been elected or appointed to serve on the Commission pursuant to Section 1.04 hereof.

⁺~~Applies to any member amongst a group of members with which an individual is affiliated.~~

The Commission shall not have among its membership more than one (1) School Commissioner affiliated with a single member of the Corporation or multiple members of the Corporation under common ownership and control.

Proposal #2 Rationale:

The Commission believes that fairness and equity in representation is an exceedingly important element of ACCSC's leadership composition and as such is mindful of wanting to avoid circumstances where a school or group of affiliated schools might have disproportionate representation. As such, the Commission believes it is prudent to establish that any individual who is affiliated with the same school as a sitting Commissioner not be eligible to serve on the ACCSC Nominating Committee. Although the Commission has not seen any impropriety with regard to the decisions of the Nominating Committee or on behalf of any of the exceptional individuals who have served on that Committee, in an abundance of caution and to avoid any appearance of disproportionate representation, the Commission is proposing to make more clear the eligibility parameters for serving on the Nominating Committee.

New Language in *Red, Bold and Italic Print*.

Section 1.09 – Committees

b. Nominating Committee:

- i. The Nominating Committee shall consist of five (5) persons as follows:
 1. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Commission;
 2. One (1) person *who is not affiliated with any sitting Commissioner*, appointed by the Chair, and confirmed by the Commission from among the following categories: a current member of the Standing Appeals Panel established by the Commission under the *Standards of Accreditation*, a person who has served as a leader of visiting teams used by the Commission for site visits to accredited institutions, a former School Commissioner or Public Commissioner as defined in Section 1.01, or a representative of the public with special knowledge, interest and expertise in career education and training; and
 3. Two (2) representatives of the members of the Corporation *who are not affiliated with any sitting Commissioner*, with each one (1) nominated and elected by the members biennially in alternate years in accordance with the voting and election procedures provided in Section 2.07 hereof.

Proposal #3 Rationale:

In 2017, the Commission changed its definition of a School Commissioner to state that it is someone whose school has not been subject to a Probation or a Warning for the preceding five years. As an initial matter, the Commission determined that such a requirement is more of a threshold eligibility criterion to submit a nomination to be a School Commissioner and not the "definition" of a School Commissioner. Second, the Commission has found that precluding individuals whose school(s) has/ve been subject to a Warning over a five-year period is a bit more restricting than originally intended only because the Commission uses Warning for a such a wide variety of issues from systemic compliance findings to a late payment of a sustaining fee. Accordingly, the Commission proposes to move this nominee eligibility restriction to the

Nominating Committee section and to only preclude those individuals whose school(s) has/ve been on Warning within the preceding 12 months.

New Language in *Red, Bold and Italic Print*.

Section 1.09 – Committees

b. Nominating Committee:

- iv. The Nominating Committee in nominating candidates, and the Commission in appointing Commissioners pursuant to Section 1.04, 1.05, and 1.08 hereof, shall, minimally, give consideration to:
 1. A nominee's:
 - a. Background, level of experience, and knowledge regarding accreditation, postsecondary education, industry, and Board governance;
 - b. Affiliation with any school that has lost or been denied accreditation by any accrediting agency, been issued a Warning or Probation Order by any accrediting agency, entered into bankruptcy, or closed (*except that the Nominating Committee may not process a nomination from a candidate whose school which would be the source of eligibility (to include any affiliated school within a group) to serve as a School Commissioner is or within the preceding five years has been subject to an ACCSC-issued Probation Order or is or within the preceding 12 months has been subject to an ACCSC-issued Warning*);
 - c. Involvement in criminal proceedings and any pending or past action (e.g., investigation, inquiry, etc.) in a judicial, law enforcement, or administrative body; and
 - d. Performance and commitment with respect to:
 - i. Providing quality education to students;
 - ii. Ethical, fair, and honest practice; and
 - iii. Compliance with accrediting standards and applicable federal, state, and local requirements;
 2. Any comments provided by the Executive Director; and
 3. The Commission's goal to achieve a diversity of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives in order to achieve the purposes of the Corporation.

If you have any questions regarding either of the proposed *Bylaws* revisions, please contact Michale S. McComis, Ed.D., Executive Director, at mccomis@accsc.org or 703.247.4520.